



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
6013 Lakeside Blvd.  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46278

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July 11, 2006

INDIANA BULLETIN NO. 440-6-5

SUBJECT: PGM – End of the Year Application and Contract Management Activities  
in ProTracts

Purpose: To announce upcoming end of the year application and contract management activities in ProTracts based on guidance received in National Bulletin 440-6-10.

Expiration Date: December 31, 2006

Background: ProTracts will undergo annual maintenance and new-year setup activities from September 15 through October 8, 2006. This temporary shutdown coincides with a year-end roll-over of FSA eligibility databases, and permits fund synchronization with the Foundation Financial Information System (FFIS). There will be a tiered suspension of activities:

After 9/15/06, no new obligations will be processed in ProTracts.

- Modifications are discouraged after 9/15/06.
- All modifications, not approved in ProTracts by 9/29/06, will be “rolled back” to their pre-modification status. These modifications can be re-entered in ProTracts, beginning 10/9/06.
- No payments will be approved in ProTracts from 10/1/06 to 10/8/06.
- Full ProTracts operations will resume October 9, 2006.
- For Indiana, DCs and APS’ need to be aware that the bills for the energy incentive practices need to be submitted to the DC by September 1, 2006, to be eligible for the incentive payment.
- All incentive practice payment information must be entered into ProTracts no later than September 15, 2006, to receive the payment.

National Bulletin 440-6-9 emphasizes the DC should pursue the following options concerning WHIP Contracts.

- Urge participants to make every effort to complete WHIP contracts that are not currently in ProTracts.
- Provide participants an opportunity to request cancellation of these older contracts if they cannot meet the contract requirements as agreed.
- If the participant takes no action or does not respond to a letter, take steps to terminate the contract.
- All active contracts not current in ProTracts will have to be put into ProTracts before the end of calendar year 2006.

Anticipated changes for FY 2007 in ProTracts:

- Posting of new appendices for each program with greater consistency between programs.

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- Roll-over of the Adjusted Gross Income and Eligibility databases (FSA).
- Adjustment of cost overrun accounts for each State, fund, and fiscal year.
- Implementation of new modification procedures for minor changes and major modifications over \$10,000 or 20% of contract obligation.
- Revision of NRCS contracting forms to streamline business and align with policy changes in CPM 512 Conservation Program Contracting.
- Entry of prior-year WHIP contracts per National Bulletin 440-6-9.
- Redesigned ProTracts entry page with one-click access to contracting resources.

National training on these changes will be delivered September 6, 2006 (information to follow).

Key State actions to prepare for FY 2006 (To be completed by SO staff)

- Prepare all cost lists in preparation for processing FY 2007 applications.
- Review and revise the practice average costs and the Conservation Practices Physical Effects (CPPE) tables in SmarTech for use in the Application Evaluation and Ranking Tool.
- Initiate revisions to Program Ranking Criteria.
- Coordinate the activation of new or replacement practice codes in Conservation Practice Standards (CPS) that will be used in FY 2007 ProTracts contracting activities with appropriate State staff.
- Customize ProTracts letters for submission to ProTracts Support.

Contact: If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the Programs staff at 317-290-3200, ext. 320.

/s/

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